



UNICEF in philately

Daniela Vogt Weisenhorn

UNICEF (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund) is one of the best-known international organizations working for the welfare and rights of children.



The first two stamps I know of on the subject of UNICEF - Austria 1949 and UN 1951

UNICEF was founded by the United Nations General Assembly on December 11, 1946. The organization was originally known as the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund and focused primarily on helping children in war-torn Europe after the Second World War. It is therefore probably not surprising that the first stamp I found honoring UNICEF is an Austrian stamp. It was issued around 2.5 years (1949) before the first UN stamp (New York, 1951).

UNICEF's original temporary mandate was to meet the urgent needs of children in Europe, such as providing food and medical care. In 1953, UNICEF's mandate was extended to include the long-term development of

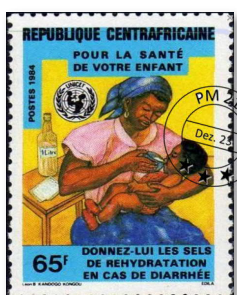
children and not just emergency aid. The promotion of children's rights is also declared a priority. In 1989, the United Nations adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which forms the framework for UNICEF's work. The Convention is the most widely accepted and ratified human rights treaty in history.

Today, UNICEF's portfolio includes a large number of activities, most of which can also be seen on a 10-panel sheet from the UN (New York) from 2021 to mark UNICEF's 75th anniversary. The priorities that UNICEF sets today include Überlebenshilfe:



UN sheet of 10 (2021) on the occasion of UNICEF's 75th anniversary - 10 areas in which UNICEF is active are iconically depicted: Health - disability - mental health - water supply/hygiene - gender - immunization - climate - humanitarian actions - nutrition - education

1. Survival aid: UNICEF provides emergency and survival aid in acute crisis situations such as natural disasters, conflicts and epidemics. This includes the provision of food, clean water, medical care and safe shelter.



Central Africa
1984

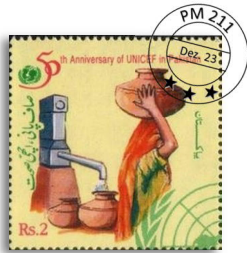
2. Health care: UNICEF supports programs to improve children's health, including immunization campaigns, combating child mortality, maternal health and the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS.

3. Education: The organization promotes access to quality education for children and young people. This includes building schools, training teachers and providing educational materials.



Switzerland 2021

4. Child protection: UNICEF is committed to protecting children from violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect. The organization works to prevent violations of children's rights and to support those who are victims of such violations.



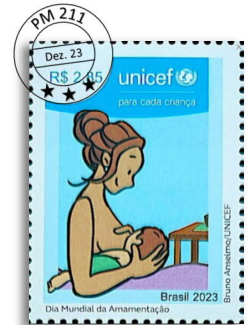
Pakistan 1998

5. Clean water and sanitation: UNICEF is working to improve children's access to clean water and safe sanitation to reduce the spread of water-borne diseases.



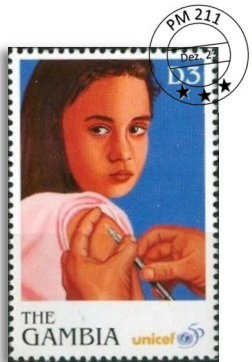
San Marino 2000

6. Nutrition: The organization promotes nutrition programmes that help to combat malnutrition in children and support children's growth and development. In the meantime, attention is also paid to the increasing number of overweight children worldwide.



Brasil 2023

7. Vaccination programs: UNICEF plays an important role in providing vaccines and promoting immunization campaigns to combat preventable childhood diseases.



Gambia 1996

8. Education: UNICEF conducts education campaigns to raise awareness of children's rights and issues. The organization advocates for children's issues at a political level and works to persuade governments and the international community to implement child-friendly policies and programs.

9. Research and data: UNICEF collects data and conducts research to better understand the situation of children worldwide and to develop sound programs and policy recommendations.

10. Emergency preparedness: UNICEF works to prepare communities and governments for emergencies and establish early warning systems to enable rapid and effective responses to crisis situations.

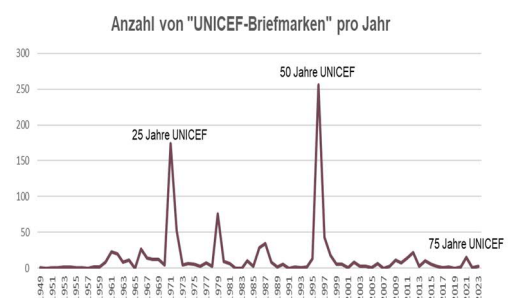
UNICEF is financed by voluntary donations from governments, organizations and private individuals. The organization conducts regular fundraising campaigns to raise funds for its programmes. Who hasn't seen the UNICEF Christmas postcards? UNICEF also works closely with other UN organizations, governments, non-governmental organizations and civil society to improve the living conditions of children. The UNICEF ambassadors from the fields of art, sport and entertainment, who are actively committed to UNICEF's concerns and draw attention to children's rights issues, are also particularly well known.



Well-known UNICEF ambassadors on stamps: Pierce Brosnan (Great Britain 2020), Christiane Hörbiger (Austria 2007); Dirk Nowitzki (Micronesia 2004); Charles Aznavour (Armenia 2018)

The importance of this organization worldwide is also reflected in the numerous stamps that deal with UNICEF. I found a total of 1064 stamps in the Colnect stamp catalog on which UNICEF is mentioned and which are therefore ambassadors for UNICEF's cause. However, I noticed something when compiling the statistics below. The number of "UNICEF stamps" issued for the organization's 25th and 50th anniversaries was significantly higher than for the 75th anniversary. In contrast to the previous anniversaries, one can even speak of a negligible number of stamp issues. Especially if 10 of the 15 issues in 2021 are from the above-mentioned UN stamp sheet. If we now assume that stamps are a measure of the importance of social and political issues in our society, this cannot mean anything good for the children of our world.

Quellen: Wikipedia.org; unicef.org





Imagine there's a fire and nobody comes....

Clemens M. Brandstetter



Austra 1998 and 1986

The fire brigade can also be counted among the "charitable" organizations in the broadest sense. We rarely see the fireman with the bucket anymore. He had to swap the container for modern technical tools. Although, one story must be told in this regard: an almost unbelievable thing happened to a firefighter from Gmünd (Lower Austria). During an operation during the 2002 floods in a neighboring community, heating oil had to be collected and pumped out of a cellar. There were not enough suitable containers for this operation; he looked around and discovered a bucket, which he "misused" for the operation. It belonged to the neighbor, who felt disturbed and reported the Floriani disciple. The

matter ended lightly for the firefighter, he was only given a warning.



The fire brigades have modernized (Austria, Greece 2020)



Of course, there are still fires, but the number of technical operations for the fire brigades is increasing, especially when a highway or numerous major roads run through a region. I'll take the westernmost Austrian state, Vorarlberg (2021), where I live, as an example. In addition to the classic fire operations, the fire brigades are also called out to technical operations, such as

- 14.I. In a mountain community, a house is hit by an avalanche, 30 m³ of snow gets into the building. No one is injured, but the material damage is enormous.
- - 14-17.I. Heavy snowfall, even in the valleys, leads to numerous operations on flat roofs. Hydrants have to be shoveled free.



The tasks of the fire brigades have changed. Today, there are also many operations involving chemical and traffic accidents, as well as rescue operations in the event of natural disasters (Ireland 2012)

- 15.I. Horse owners discover a fire in a stable - the fire brigade is able to save horses and cows. The enormous amount of snow makes the operation difficult.
- 23.II. A biomass heating plant in a tourist community catches fire. Numerous fire brigades have to be called out to extinguish the fire.
- 14.III. A balcony fire spreads to a roof truss fire.
- 23.III. A one-family home burns down completely, a body is recovered after the fire is extinguished. An electric vehicle is recovered by a special unit.
- 28.III. A hybrid vehicle catches fire in a carport; the fire brigade cools the vehicle and transports it to the fire station for observation. There, the vehicle catches fire again; after consultation with the manufacturer, it is lifted into a skip and flooded with water.
- 1.V. On the A14 Rhine Valley highway, a vehicle skids and crashes into a guard rail and bridge pillar. Two people die. Hydraulic rescue equipment is used.



The fire brigade is also deployed alongside other helpers in the event of avalanches (FL 2013)



Volunteer fire brigade (Netherlands 2001, Italy special postmark)



- 2.V. On a mountain road, a vehicle leaves the road, overturns and comes to rest on its roof. One person ejected from the vehicle does not survive the accident.
- 11.V. A man is buried up to his neck by soil in a pit during an accident at work. He is rescued and flown by rescue helicopter to the regional hospital.
- 2.XII. A barrel of chemicals tips over in a haulage company and leaks out. Firefighters in protective suits are able to collect the chemicals and hand them over to a disposal company.

- 17.XII. A hazardous goods accident occurs at a chemical company. A worker accidentally mixes two chemicals in a plastic tank. Nitrose vapors escape. The employees of a hazardous goods train are able to dilute and collect the chemicals.
- -23.XII. A sparkler causes a room fire that quickly engulfs a building. 140 firefighters are deployed.



Also austrian fire brigades are deployed in a variety of accidents (Austrian stamp edition)



- 31.XII. New Year's Eve firecrackers set fire to several vehicles in an underground parking garage. The fire spreads to residential buildings. Injured people are taken to hospital, over 100 firefighters are deployed.

In 2021, there are almost 5,000 fire-fighting operations in Vorarlberg, an average of 14 operations a day. 12



young firefighters work around 1 ½ hours on each call; in total, this amounts to almost 100,000 hours. In addition, there are countless hours of education and training provided by 120 volunteer local fire brigades and 23 company fire brigades.

These diverse operations require medical training that goes beyond basic first aid. This is why there are so-called fire brigade paramedics in Austria. In around 80 lessons of 45 minutes each, they are specially trained in traffic accident management, resuscitation training with defibrillators and cooperation with the emergency services. Their most important tasks include the initial treatment of emergency patients until the arrival of the regular rescue service during fire-fighting operations, as well as securing their own emergency services (usually in cooperation with a rescue service unit acting as ambulance supervision).



The fire brigade paramedic is characterized by sound first aid training and more (France 2010). He/she can also handle the defibrillator.



A big forest fire and nobody extinguishes it (Mozambique 1980)

For years now, however, the fire brigade has had the problem that there are fewer and fewer personnel (whether professional or volunteer firefighters), which means that the fire brigade's nationwide coverage is at risk. "Imagine there's a fire and nobody comes" or "Extinguish it yourself" are slogans that are now widespread here. What I didn't know was that in Germany, Austria and Switzerland there is a so-called compulsory fire brigade. It can be set up if fire protection is no longer guaranteed. Suitable people (especially those who are fit for duty and trained) are then obliged to serve in the fire brigade.

This compulsory fire brigade does not yet exist anywhere in Austria (it was only discussed once in a Tyrolean village due to internal

village disputes). In Germany, such involuntary fire brigades exist sporadically, although it must be said that it is not possible to actually enforce real service and assistance in fact or in law. The situation is quite different in Switzerland. The so-called militia principle prevails there, in which public duties are usually carried out on a part-time basis. As a result, everyone is obliged to be a firefighter, whether male or female, Swiss or not. This means that compulsory firefighting is actually the norm in Switzerland, which is also reflected in the figures. In 2021, there were 78,000 firefighters, of which only around 1,200 worked in professional fire brigades.



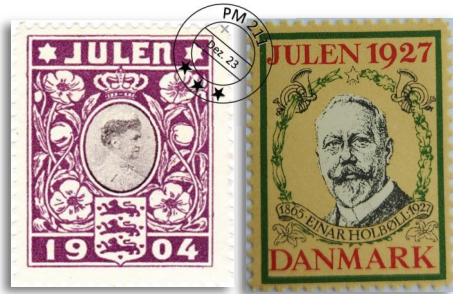
In Switzerland, being part of a firebrigade is compulsory (Switzerland 1986)

Nevertheless, we should make sure that the slogan "Imagine there's a fire and nobody comes" does not become a reality. We can start by showing greater appreciation for the work of volunteer firefighters.....

Christmas Seal Stamps

Daniela M. Vogt Weisenhorn

Seal stamps are letter sealing stamps. They replaced the wax seal around 1870 and were originally used by government offices, universities, state institutions and the military. They are not actually a philatelic collecting area in the strict sense, but collectors can be found all over the world.



The first Christmas seal stamp in 1904 bears the likeness of the then Queen of Denmark. The "inventor" of these stamps was honored in 1927 with a seal stamp dedicated to him

The Christmas seal stamp, which can be used to seal Christmas and New Year's mail, was invented by Danish postal employee E. Holboell. The first stamp with the portrait of Queen Louise of Denmark appeared on December 10, 1904. The idea of Christmas seal stamps quickly spread and was imitated in 130 countries over time. The small stamp with the red double cross became a

banner in the crusade against tuberculosis, as the Christmas seal stamp played an important role at the beginning of the 20th century in raising money to build tuberculosis sanatoriums for children and adults from socially disadvantaged backgrounds. The months-long "open-air cures" and "hygienic-dietetic treatment" in "immune places" - such as the Schatzalp (see exhibit pages) - could only be afforded by the wealthy at the time. However, the money from Christmas seal sales was later also used for screening examinations of people at risk of disease and to provide housing for tuberculosis sufferers. The choice of motifs in Germany was no longer primarily influenced by the idea of Christmas, but by TB.

Aber auch die Weihnachtssiegelmarken unterliegen dem Wandel der Zeit. Mit dem Rückgang der Tuberkulose stellten etliche Organisationen die Siegelmarkenaktionen ein. Andere weiteten den Verwendungszweck auf die Prävention und Erforschung von Lungenkrankheiten aus. In Deutschland sammelt heute nur noch das Kuratorium Tuberkulose in der Welt e. V. Spenden. Der Erlös kommt in erster Linie Entwicklungsländern mit immer noch hoher



1993: The sheet of German Christmas seal stamps consists of 15 stamps with illustrations of Christmas seal stamps from previous years and 3 decorative fields with inscriptions

Tuberkuloseprävalenz zugute. The choice of motifs in Germany has also changed. Tuberculosis is now the focus of the stamps and no longer just Christmas.

In 2023, I have only found one country that still issues Christmas stamps: Canada.

